



Independent School Dist. No. 857
100 County Road 25
Lewiston, MN 55952
(507) 523-2191

Gwen Carman, Superintendent
Cory Hanson, High School Principal • Dave Riebel, PK - Elementary Principal

Building A Caring, Adaptable, Respectful, Determined, Successful Community of Learners

Belief Statements (internal operations- beliefs to drive decisions):

- **LIFELONG LEARNERS:** We believe in the value of education for all ages.
- **ACCOUNTABILITY:** We believe we are accountable for our actions and outcomes.
- **COMMUNITY CENTERED:** We believe our schools are the central hub of our community and essential for building strong communities.
- **ADAPTABLE:** We believe in being responsive to an ever-changing world.
- **RESPECTFUL:** We believe in everyone’s right to safety, respect, and dignity in our schools.
- **DIVERSE:** We believe in fostering the value of each other’s individual differences, perspectives, and life experiences.
- **STUDENT FOCUSED:** We believe that we are all responsible for the success of students.

Goals

1. **STUDENT SUCCESS:** Provide all students with the education they need for success: academically, emotionally, and socially.
2. **EFFECTIVE STAFFING:** Hire, maintain, train and support staff to be as effective as possible.
3. **FINANCE:** Be financially healthy and sustainable.
4. **FACILITIES:** Have facilities that are safe, modern and conducive to 21st century education.
5. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** Engage with parents, community members and business owners.

Superintendent’s Report to the School Board

Respectfully Submitted by Gwen Carman

June 10, 2024

Meeting Agenda Items Notes

Closed Session We will have closed session for two purposes that are allowed under the Open Meeting Law – to discuss the possible sale of district property and for discussing evaluation of the superintendent.

2024-2025 General Fund Budget Julie will be at the Board meeting to discuss the FY25 budget we are recommending. She and I reviewed the entire budget and made adjustments as we felt we could. We also reviewed the elementary and high school budgets with the principals and make adjustments and to assure every line item was appropriate. As you know, the general fund budget is very tight and we cannot exceed it. The proposed General Fund budget is \$6,257.00 deficit. Attached to the agenda is the total budget summary prepared by Julie, and also a document that lists the General Fund budget adjustments.

Driver and Support Staff Handbooks The agenda includes recommended 2024-2025 Handbooks for Support Staff (Paraprofessionals, Office Staff, Food Service) and Bus/Supplemental Drivers Handbook. The proposed wage increases are included as part of the recommended FY25 budget. The wage changes reflect paying all staff a minimum of \$15.00/hour (except high school Cardinal Club workers), OR a 2% increase – whichever is greater. Thank you to Sara, Sarah, Daniel and Julie for meeting and discussing these. These employees were also invited to a meeting in May to meet with us and share their thoughts. This process was very difficult because of the need to balance our financial limitations, our recognition of the particularly low wages for some

of the employees, recognition of the importance of trying to provide competitive wages to hire and maintain staff, and our great respect and appreciation for all of these very important staff members.

Hiawatha Valley Special Education Updates Deb Marcotte, Executive Director will be at our meeting to provide an update on HVED, the transition to the Winona Mall Location and be available to answer any questions regarding how HVED supports our students with IEPs, our special education staff and administrators.

Long Range Planning: Operating Levy and Building Bond Referendums As you know, the Task Force met on May 20th and reviewed the data and information from the May 1st and May 8th Community Meetings. On the agenda are items to continue to move forward with planning for a \$760/student operating levy, and approving to have InGensa, Inc. submit a Review and Comment for a building bond referendum to MDE on the district's behalf. These agenda items are not 'final' or the official 'call' for an election.

Spanish Trip 2025 Dr. Hanson will present an alternative trip proposal to Costa Rica.

OTHER ITEMS

Voluntary PK Spot Application Submitted The 2024 MN Legislature opened an additional 5200 VPK spots. These are funded at the equivalent of 0.6 ADM. I submitted the required application – 43% of these spots will be awarded to non metro, urban or charter schools. We should know by the end of June if we are approved.

2024-2025 Bus Routes Kevin, Cory, Dave, Vickie and I met to plan next year's bus routes. As you know, we have planned for one less bus route next year. As a result, we are planning that we will have 9 (not 10) daily AM & PM routes (when all drivers are available). We are planning to not have a pick up/drop off location in Winona. We will continue to have pick up/drop off locations in Stockton, Wilson Fire Hall and Rollingstone. It is believed that any loss of enrollment due to this change will be minimal (if at all) and this enables us to spread out the pick ups/drop offs across drivers. Most of the families that are currently utilizing the Winona location were driving to Stockton prior to the change two years ago. This will also shorten those students' bus ride times. I will be mailing individual letters to those families impacted by this change. We are anticipating all bus drivers will be returning in the fall. We will continue to have a very short substitute list or need to combine routes if necessary. We are also planning our van route needs and driver availability.

Solar Panel Projects: I met with Brady Boyum at People's State Bank and he confirmed their commitment to a 5.75% interest rate for the duration of the project financing. We will not need financing until Spring 2025. As you know, the State Grant (50%) will reimburse fairly quickly. The financing will cover the anticipated longer time gap between the construction vs the federal grant reimbursement (30%). The district is responsible for the remaining 20% of the costs which we will finance – however, our payments will be offset by the energy savings after the panels are fully operational. The payments will not be for longer than 5 years and then we will benefit from significant energy savings each month.

I also have been working with Brok Johnson, Solar Connections, Inc. on additional paperwork for the grants and an MOU with MiEnergy. He submitted the final grant applications on June 6th.

Tree Planting Thank you to the Cardinal Foundation, Dan Buege, Dave Riebel, Cory Hanson, Kaleb Stoppelmoor and volunteers for their collaboration in planting 10 trees on our campuses. Holly Burt has also submitted a grant to an outside grant funder to upgrade the district's watering capabilities.

Community Events Lewiston Heartland Days will be June 19-23. This is the 3rd year I have served as the Treasurer for the Committee. The Lewiston Lions are having their annual Pancake/French Toast breakfast June 23rd. Most events will be at The Crossings Center. The Lewiston Chamber of Commerce will be meeting at noon at the Rec Café on Wednesday, June 19th.

MN State High School League Informational Video <https://youtu.be/KU2o-bpoAs8>

A reminder of the importance of considering equity in the work we do.
Every student deserves our best and what s/he needs to achieve.

